

APA General Format: Research Papers

General format for papers written in APA style is covered in the first chapter of the *Publication Manual* (**Call number here at Morrisville College Library: REF BF 76.7 .P83 2001**), starting on page ten. What follows are some general guidelines for formatting.

What should my paper look like?

- Your paper should be typed and double-spaced on standard-sized paper (8.5 X 11 inches).
- The margins of your paper should be set to 1 inch on all sides.
- Your paper should include a title page.
- Your paper should include a running manuscript head in the upper right hand corner of each page that offers a short version of the title and a page number. See example below.
- The pages of your paper should be numbered consecutively, beginning with the title page, as part of the manuscript header in the upper right corner of each page.
- There should also only be one space after punctuation marks such as a period. This allows editors to conserve space in their journals.

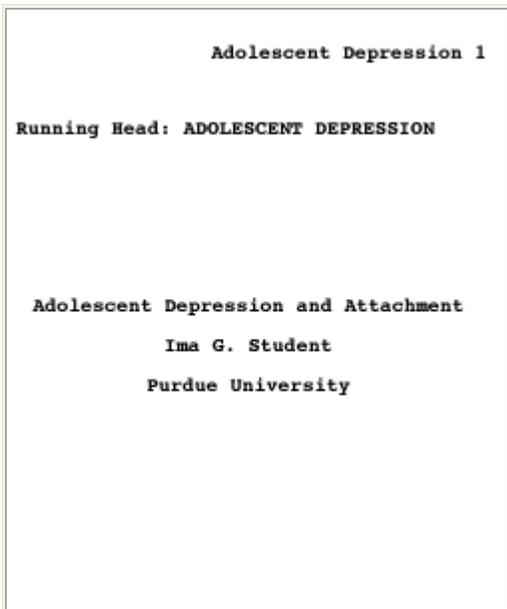
Title Page

The title page needs to include 4 items:

1. **The title of your paper.** The title should concisely state the topic of the paper and the variables or theoretical issues that are being explored in relation to that topic. The title should be about 10-12 words long and should be centered in the middle of your page.
2. **The author's name and institutional affiliation.** The institutional affiliation is just the name of the place (usually a college or university) where the research was conducted. The author's name and institutional affiliation should be centered and placed directly below the title.
3. **A running head.** This is just an abbreviated version of your title, and should include no more than 50 characters (including spaces and punctuation). The running head is what appears at the top of each page next to the page number throughout the paper. The running head designation should be left justified and appear at the top of the page after the page number.

4. **A page number.** Page numbers should appear on the title page in the upper right hand corner, after the running head. Pages should then be numbered consecutively in the upper right hand corner throughout the paper.

Here is a sample title page in APA format. Note how it includes the running head and page number in the upper right hand corner, defines the running head that will title all manuscript pages, and centers the title and author information in the middle of the page.



Running head: INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN BIMODAL PROCESSES

Individual Differences in Bimodal Processing

And Text Recall

John Doe

Morrisville State College

References

Your reference list should appear at the end of your paper. It provides the information necessary for a reader to locate and retrieve any source you cite in the body of the paper. **Each source you cite in the paper must appear in your reference list**; likewise, each entry in the reference list must be cited in your text. In your reference list, you provide information about:

- the author(s) of each work or the institution or group that created the work
- the date that the work was published
- the title of each work
- whether the work appears as part of a larger work (such as an article in a journal or newspaper, or a chapter in an essay collection)
- where the work was published
- who published the work
- information that would help someone retrieve the work (such as a web page address or an access number for an electronic database)

If you don't have complete information for a reference, include as much information as you do have when you create your reference list. For example, it's common for web pages to not have authors. This just means that you don't include an author, and instead start with the title of the work.

The APA has guidelines for how you should format this information; these guidelines are different for different kinds of references. Please consult the MLA manual: **REF BF 76.7 .P83 2001**

Your references should begin on a separate page from the text of the essay under the label References (with no quotation marks, underlining, etc.), centered at the top of the page. It should be double-spaced, just like the rest of your essay.

Basic Rules

- Authors' names are inverted (last name first); give the last name and initials for all authors of a particular work unless the work has more than six authors. If the work has more than six authors, list the first six authors and then use et al. after the sixth author's name to indicate the rest of the authors.

- Reference list entries should be alphabetized by the last names of the first author of each work.
- If you have more than one article by the same author(s), single-author references or multiple-author references with the exact same authors in the exact same order are listed in order by the year of publication, starting with the earliest.

For example:

- Use "&" instead of "and" when listing multiple authors of a single work.
- If no author is given for a particular source, begin with and alphabetize by using the **title** of the work, which will be listed in place of the author, and use a shortened version of the title for parenthetical citations.
- All lines **after** the first line of each entry in your reference list should be indented one-half inch from the left margin. This is called hanging indentation.
- When referring to any work that is NOT a journal, such as a book, article, or Web page, capitalize only the first letter of the first word of a title and subtitle, the first word after a colon or a dash in the title, and proper nouns. Do not capitalize the first letter of the second word in a hyphenated compound word.
- Capitalize all major words in journal titles.
- Italicize titles of longer works such as books and journals.

Do not italicize, underline, or put quotes around the titles of shorter works such as journal articles or essays in edited

Citing Sources In Your Text

When to use citations

Whenever you use other people's words or ideas in your writing, you should cite that source of information. Whether you are summarizing, paraphrasing or quoting a work directly, you must give credit to the originator of the idea that you are using. When you use another person's words directly, they must be enclosed in quotation marks, with the source cited. **Failure to cite appropriately is the same as claiming those ideas or words as your own and is considered plagiarism.**

When using APA format, follow the author-date method of in-text citation. This means that the author's last name and the year of publication for the source should appear in the text, and a complete reference should appear in the reference list at the end of the paper. Reference citations in text are covered on pages 207-214 of the *Publication Manual*.

Formatting citations

Here are some basic rules for formatting citations in the body of your paper. For more information about these rules, see pages 94-99 and 207-209 of the *Publication Manual*. For information about formatting citations in your reference list.

- Always capitalize proper nouns, including author names.
- If you refer to the title of a source within your paper, capitalize all words that are four letters long or greater within the title of a source.
- When capitalizing titles, capitalize both words in a hyphenated compound word.
- After a colon or dash in a title, capitalize the first word.
- Italicize the titles of longer works such as books, edited collections, movies, documentaries, or albums.
- Put quotation marks around the titles of shorter works such as journal articles, articles from edited collections, television shows, and song titles.

- If a work has two authors, cite both names every time the reference appears in your text. Join the authors' names with the word and if you are referring to them in the text; join the authors' names with an ampersand (&) if you are referring to them in a parenthetical citation.
- If a work has three, four, or five authors, cite all of the authors the first time you refer to the work in your text. The next time you refer to the work, shorten the citation to the last name of the first author plus the words et al. Join the authors' names with the word and if you are referring to them in the text; join the authors' names with an ampersand (&) if you are referring to them in a parenthetical citation.
- If a work has six authors (or more), cite only the last name of the first author plus the words et al.

How to use citations

Generally, it is best to put both the author and date in parentheses after you refer to information from that source (see example a). If you include this at the end of the sentence, be sure that the citation is before the period. If you directly refer to the author or date in the sentence, then you do not need to include that information in parentheses. It is recommended to refer to the author's name in the sentence itself only if that particular author is really important in what you are trying to say (e.g., you are describing their theory, your methodology is based on theirs). If you are just stating research findings, then you should try to put their name in parentheses so the reader's attention is focused on the findings.

Examples for referring to another idea or study:

- | |
|---|
| <p>a. In a recent study of student performance (Jones, 1998), ...</p> <p>b. Jones (1998) compared student performance ...</p> <p>c. In 1998, Jones compared student performance ...</p> |
|---|

If you are referring to an idea from another work but **NOT** directly quoting the material, or making reference to an entire book, article or other work, you only have to make reference to the author and year of publication in your in-text reference.

If you are paraphrasing an idea from another work, you only have to make reference to the author and year of publication in your in-text

reference, but APA guidelines encourage you to also provide the page number (although it is not required.)

If you are directly quoting from a work, you will need to include the author, year of publication, and the page number for the reference. See our sections on [quotations](#) for more information about this.

If there is no author to cite, such as when you are citing a web page that lists no author, use an abbreviated version of the title of the page in quotation marks to substitute for the name of the author.

A similar study was done of students learning to format research papers ("Using APA," 2001).

If you are citing a work that has no author and no date, use the first few words from the title, then the abbreviation n.d. (for "no date").

In another study of students and research decisions, it was discovered that students succeeded with tutoring ("Tutoring and APA," n.d.).

Personal communications, such as e-mail messages to you, or private interviews that you conducted with another person, should be referred to in your in-text citations but **NOT** in Reference list examples. (For more information, see page 214 of the *Publication Manual*.) To cite a personal communication, provide initials and last name of the communicator, the words personal communication, plus an exact date in the body of your paper.

For example:

A. P. Smith also claimed that many of her students had difficulties with APA style (personal communication, November 3, 2002).